



NEWS RELEASE

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ALABAMA ENTREPRENEUR IS NATIONAL SMALL BUSINESS PERSON OF THE YEAR

Oregon, Pennsylvania and Florida Winners Are Runners-Up

WASHINGTON - A contractor from Huntsville, Ala., has been named as the National Small Business Person of the Year.

In a White House ceremony this afternoon, the U.S. Small Business Administration today named **Thornton Stanley, president of Stanley Construction Co.**, the winner of the 38th annual entrepreneurial award.

Mr. Stanley was selected from a group of 53 state Small Business Persons of the Year representing the 50 states, the District of Columbia, Puerto Rico and Guam. His company is a leader in excavation and paving and is among the top 20 subcontractors in Alabama and the top 100 contractors in the United States.

“Thornton Stanley is a true example of the American dream achieved through hard work and determination,” said John Whitmore, Acting Administrator of the SBA. **“Both business acumen and commitment to employees have been key to the success and longevity of his company. This is what the SBA is all about – helping to build well-rounded businesses that stay in business.”**

The **runners-up** this year in the national competition are **Cindy M. McEntee, first runner-up, president and owner, Mo’s Enterprises, Inc.**, a food manufacturer and restaurant chain located in Newport, Ore.; **Frank Sarris, second runner-up, president, Sarris Candies, Inc.**, a candy manufacturer in Canonsburg, Pa.; and **Brindley B. Pieters, third runner-up, president, Brindley Pieters & Associates, Inc.**, an engineering services company in Altamonte Springs, Fla.

The national small business awards are a highlight of SBA’s National Small Business Week celebration, May 7-9. National Small Business Week, now in its 38th year, honors the contributions of the nation’s small business owners. The winners are selected on their record of stability, growth in employment and sales, financial condition, innovation, response to adversity, and community service. Involvement with SBA is *not* a selection criteria, though more than half the winners received financial or management assistance from the SBA at some point.

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Mr. Stanley began Stanley Construction Co. in the spare bedroom of his home in Huntsville in 1961. The company was incorporated in 1973 and since has grown to a \$6 million business with more than 55 employees. It handles all aspects of horizontal construction including rock blasting, clearing and grubbing, earthwork, the installation of storm sewers, and the pouring of concrete and asphalt.

Mr. Stanley attributes his success to his hands-on approach, visiting each construction site daily. A strong believer in family, Mr. Stanley has made sure that his children learn the workings of the family business. Believing competent people are the key to success, Mr. Stanley places great value on his employees, focusing recruitment on people who enjoy the work the company has to offer and want to grow with it.

Mo's Enterprises has been a family business since it opened in 1946 and now consists of three restaurants in the Newport area. When her grandmother retired in 1987, Ms. McEntee stepped in to run the business. Mo's Enterprises also owns and operates a chowder factory, which produces a frozen clam chowder base sold to retail stores. Mo's restaurants have become nationally known for their New England-style clam chowder along with their cod fish 'n' chips, clam strips, and hamburgers.

Mr. Sarris started his business from his home in 1960. The company grew by 1963 to a 1,600 square-foot retail facility, still the site of the business today. Sarris Candies started with three employees and sales of \$600. The business now employs more than 350 people at two locations with nearly \$16 million in annual sales. Production has expanded to a 120,000 square-foot facility that includes a manufacturing plant, a distribution center, and two retail outlets.

Mr. Pieters has been in the engineering business for 28 years. His company has grown from a staff of three completing a handful of projects to a staff of 34 professionals successfully completing more than 150 projects with gross revenues topping \$3.25 million. The company offers professional engineering services to an impressive list of repeat clients from both government and industry.

For more information on National Small Business Week and a complete list of award winners, visit the SBA's Small Business Week Web site at <http://smallbusinesssuccess.sba.gov/>.

Additional information about SBA programs and services is available at SBA's Web site: <http://www.sba.gov/>. Or call the SBA Answer Desk at 1-800-U-ASK-SBA.

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